

**CITY OF GAHANNA
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – June 6, 2012**

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Luke Messinger called the meeting of the Parks & Recreation Board to order on Wednesday, June 6, 2012, 7:01pm, Gahanna Senior Center

ROLL CALL

Present: Cynthia Franzmann
Luke Messinger
Eric Miller
Laurel Naegele
Jan Ross
Vincent Tremante

Absent: Jill Schuler

In attendance from the City was Tony Collins, Director, Troy Euton, Deputy Director, and Beth McCollam, Public Information/Marketing Coordinator, Department of Parks & Recreation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Miller made a **MOTION** to approve the May 2, 2012 meeting minutes; seconded by Naegele. **On roll call vote:** Franzmann, yes, Messinger, yes, Miller, yes, Naegele, yes, Ross, yes and Tremante, yes. **Motion carried 6-0.**

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

New Business - Senior Center Advisory Board Appointment
Collins suggested moving the soccer discussion to number one under new business

HEARING OF VISITORS

Messinger stated that according to Code 153.03 the Parks Board is the appeals body for resolving disputes regarding allocation and use of Parks & Recreation facilities and programs. If you wish to speak, a Speaker Request form needs completed and your comments need limited to three (3) minutes.

Speakers will speak in the order in which the Board received their Speaker Request form.
Gahanna Soccer Association – GSA
Gahanna New Albany Association – GNA
Schelotto & Padula Soccer Academy – S&PA
Central Ohio Elite – COE
Mid Ohio Select Soccer League - MOSSL
Gahanna Department of Parks & Recreation - GDPR

Frank J. Agin - 2701 Tally Ho Lane Columbus OH

Mr. Agin stated that he is not a resident of Gahanna; however he owns a business in Gahanna for 17 years. Mr. Agin has volunteered as a coach and for years and currently serves on the Board of the Gahanna non-profit travel club. Mr. Agin stated no soccer team, club or academy including S&PA should be permitted to train or practice at Gahanna soccer facilities; parks known as Headley, Hannah, Shull and McCorkle. As long as he has been involved in Gahanna

soccer the message has been “there is no practicing on game fields”. All teams need to train and practice elsewhere. Each year they communicate this same message, despite this they are often challenged by the coaches, parents and players. This long standing rule exists because it best preserves the fields for game play. The entire Gahanna soccer community adheres to this policy; every recreation team, every club team, every middle school and every high school team finds somewhere else to practice. Collectively we use other non-soccer Gahanna parks, make arrangements with schools and churches, and rent other facilities both indoor and outdoor. Now we find that S&PA has an arrangement with the City that allows them to use game fields to conduct practices in preparation for games and tournaments. Here is no equity in this and no rational way to explain it to our parents. Allowing S&PA to conduct practice operations on Gahanna game fields is unfair and it violates the long standing rule the Gahanna soccer community has adhered to for years. Most importantly by continuing to allow them to practice on game fields it will destroy the fields for long term. In summary no soccer team, club or academy include S&PA should be permitted to train or practice on Gahanna soccer fields.

Thomas Briggs – 688 Fleetrun Ave Gahanna OH

Mr. Briggs stated he has been a resident of Gahanna for almost 29 and associated with Gahanna soccer for over 20 years and is currently VP of Operations for Gahanna soccer and would like to address the issue of S&PA being allowed to continue to operate in any park within the City of Gahanna. GSA, a non-profit association, has operated in Gahanna for over 25 years. Operating both recreational and select level soccer programs for the residents in Gahanna and have contributed over 1 million dollars worth of capital improvements to Headley, Shull, McCorkle and Hannah Parks. Soccer built the current building at Headley Park and has offered to provide additional funding to GDPR in the form of re-sealing the driveway, as well as helping defer some of the cost of mowing, lining the fields and re-seeding. We are trying to provide the best recreational soccer facilities to the residents and tax payers of Gahanna. Mr. Briggs and John Will, President of GSA met at one of the first meetings with GDPR and representatives of S&PA, a for profit organization. The expressed intent of S&PA was to provide training to Gahanna and other area soccer players. At no time during the meeting was there mention of S&PA forming and operating a recreational soccer program. However S&PA has recently stated in their application to the Mid Ohio Select Soccer League that they will be offering a recreational soccer program and they will be playing games at Headley Park. This can't be true; GSA, GNA and COE have previously been granted exclusive use of Headley Park by GDPR. While being trained by former major league soccer players may be attractive to players having two recreational programs operating in the same location and competing for the same players is not feasible. There are only a limited number of players and the fields cannot withstand the constant use and subsequent abuse. As a well established non-profit organization the GSA request the Gahanna Parks & Recreation Board to exercise the option that is contained in the 2012-2013 program agreement with S&PA to provide 30 day notice to S&PA that the agreement will be terminated with S&PA effective immediately and that S&PA will no longer be allowed to offer training or games at any park in Gahanna.

Dennis James – 8160 Bevelhymer Rd Westerville OH

Mr. James stated he is the VP of Administration for Gahanna soccer and has been on GSA board for about 15 years. Up until now there has been a great cooperation between the City of Gahanna and GSA to build great soccer parks. The City buys the land and GSA develops it. The building that GSA built at Headley Park was given to the City. GSA is willing to fully fund the pavement replacement at Headley Park. GSA has sponsored GNA, COE and MOSSL; we will not sponsor a another entity. It has taken over 30 years to build soccer in Gahanna to the height it has reached, a new entity should not be allowed to ride our coat tails and benefit from what we have all built as volunteers. There is only a finite number of soccer players out there if S&PA grows; GSA shrinks, if they succeed GSA fails. Don't let anything happen that will be

harmful to the Gahanna soccer community. Let S&PA find a community that needs help in developing a soccer program, Gahanna does not need help. S&PA needs to go. Mr. James request the city to give S&PA their 30 day notice.

Gregory O'Molesky – 2668 Andover Rd Upper Arlington OH – Attorney for S&PA

Mr. O'Molesky stated he is the attorney for the S&PA and S&P Foundation. S&PA is unable to make it here this evening, because in addition to being great athletes they are very hard working business men and are in the middle of another very successful try out session and have to work. S&PA would like to clear up any miss information, distortions and falsehoods regarding S&PA. S&PA is a conscientious and good partner with GDPR. There is a misconception that S&PA no longer has a contract with GDPR; this is untrue. There is another misconception that S&PA are somehow outside profiteers. The contract with the S&PA provides that 15% of the fees paid go directly to the City. When S&PA was established they set their core values of integrity and humility. S&PA also has many volunteers helping in their work. The staff and volunteers of S&PA are good people and know that a wonderful partnership with them and the City of Gahanna has just begun.

Melani M. Pottorf – 215 Ashley Ct. Gahanna OH

Ms. Pottorf stated she has lived in Gahanna for 15 years. She has volunteered her time with the travel soccer league since 2006. Ms. Pottorf believes that S&PA as a training only academy which was the original intend would be a great asset to Gahanna. However S&PA as it is currently functioning not as a training only academy, is a bad idea for Gahanna and they should not be allowed to continue here. Ms. Pottorf request the City initiate their 30 day termination of the contract. As they are currently functioning S&PA duplicates and distracts from the community soccer program that already exist in Gahanna. S&PA provides the same services GNA does as a for profit organization. Just like GNA, S&PA registers their players through a national sanctioned body, plays games in a competitive travel league in Ohio, sends their teams to tournaments throughout the Columbus area, and charges comparable fees to train and improve the soccer skills of the kids in our community. However S&PA differs; GNA is a non-profit run by a board of community volunteers. S&PA is a for profit organization comprised of entrepreneurs from outside of Gahanna. GNA also provides free programming, such as volunteer coach's clinics and an injury prevention seminar. S&PA came to Gahanna because of the great soccer community we have built. They have come because GSA is the largest, most reasonable and stable recreation soccer program in Central Ohio. They have come to ride the coat tails of success of thousands of hours, countless volunteers. They have come to train at Headley fields because it is a fantastic place to train, which has historically been reserved for game play only. S&PA has come to consume as much field space at Headley and other fields as they grow. S&PA is a terrible idea for Gahanna.

Veronica Redmond - 3150 Grey Fox Drive Gahanna Oh

Ms Redmond stated that as a member of the soccer community she likes the fact that Headley is being used for training. Just as it would be difficult for travel softball, baseball and football simulate their field use; it is important that kids play on actual fields of appropriate size, with appropriate size goals to improve their training. It cost \$1,000 to \$1,800 per year per child for training. New Albany Parks permits Crew Jr. to practice and games on their park land and still have found a way to maintain their turf to a high quality fashion. Ms. Redmond personally believes it is a waste of space to not allow the fields to be used for training as well as for games. And really believes what is being asked here is to help eliminate competition. Gahanna does not restrict the number of business in town; which many compete next door to each other.

Some survive and some don't; therefore the Parks Board should not restrict the number of clubs in town, because each club's philosophy and management appeals to different people. Ms. Redmond stated her kids are a prime example; has one child in GNS, one child in Crew Jr. and one child in S&PA. They are not competing for players as previously mentioned. Ms. Redmond said her own kids have gone to different clubs for different purposes. I feel the clubs should pay for the upkeep of the fields or don't practice there, maybe there should be a tiered fee, one for just games and one for games and practices. This would not be any different than a normal business looking for a location. I hope that the Parks Board has changed its stance and is forward thinking and not restricting on not what it has done in the past but looking ahead at what it can do and continue to serve its community members and how it can continue to pay for the upkeep. I hope to see more of that. If the club is for profit or non-profit can afford to help pay for the maintenance they should be allowed to help pay for the maintenance.

Paul Russell – 1119 Black Gold Place Gahanna OH

Mr. Russell stated has lived in Gahanna 13 years and has volunteered with both GSA and GNA. Mr. Russell feels it is important that both GSA and GNA are community based organizations that are tied to the community and not going anywhere. GSA and GNA are asking to be treated fairly. Mr. Russell feels they are not being treated fairly and are at a disadvantage. It is important to soccer players to be able to practice on facilities that are striped with goals, currently GSA and GNA does not have that option; because we were good citizens GSA and GNA both agreed not to practice on the Gahanna soccer facilities. You have a for profit entity not based out of Gahanna, they have no ties to Gahanna; if they get a better offer tomorrow they are going to be gone. They are paying money to use your facilities, my facilities as a tax payer and resident. We want the same options, either let us practice just like they can or don't let them practice. Put them in the same position as we are. It is the non-profit community against a for profit entity and treating them differently. Is that what you want to tell the whole community in Gahanna, we are going to treat the non-profit soccer community that has been here for a long time that has put a lot of energy, time and money into keeping the fields operating and providing a lot of opportunities for Gahanna kids or are you going to side with the for profit entity who doesn't really care and it is just a convenience to have found a facility in Central Ohio where they can get established.

Jimmy Dragich – 1165 Aroya Ct New Albany OH

Mr. Dragich stated he has been a part of GSA and GNA for the past five years. I am asking the board to let GSA and GNA practice on the fields at Headley Park. Mr. Dragich's team practices on the fields at New Horizon Church which is like a cow pasture, high grass and no lines. Soccer is a huge business. Mr. Dragich's would like to move his team to COE or S&PA, but he has parents who want to stay with GNA. Many teams have left GNA because the convenience of practicing on lined fields. What kind of business is Gahanna running if you are going to let someone come in and taking our kids. If you give another team an opportunity to play on our fields; I want that luxury, I want to go with them. You have to let us practice on the fields; how can we be successful playing? Other cities fields are practiced on constantly. You are letting another company come in here and be allowed practice and play on our fields and take tax payers money. It hurts Gahanna.

Matthew Plants – 521 Hannifin Dr Blacklick OH

Mr. Plants has one child in GSA, one in GNA and one in S&PA. The biggest thing I am appalled with is that this is just over competition. This is a small business that has come in, they could have taken their business to anywhere in the city; and they still can. The majority of kids on this team are not from Gahanna. These are people who are coming into your community and spending money in your city. For Gahanna to have S&PA here I am grateful to be able to give

my kids another level of play. There are two professional players here who are great; who is going to be able to compete with them? The biggest issue is everyone wants on the fields to train. Training and practices are no different between the two. Field usage everyone should get field usage, S&PA is paying for field usage; you can rent fields from GDPR for \$50 for 2 hours; it is the same for everybody. GSA sponsors COE. COE is for profit and holds their try-outs just the same and are taking kids. Why is everyone saying something about one and not the other?

Casey Cannon – 950 Venetian Way Gahanna OH

Mr. Cannon stated he is a proud Gahanna resident and both of his sons started playing soccer at the YMCA, GSA, GNA and now S&PA. I feel both GNA and GSA are approaching this issue from the wrong perspective. GSA and GNA are trying to drive the small business from our city, Mr. Cannon stated “I wonder how the Mayor would respond to the triple whammy”. Kick out a small business, reduce revenues, and reduce recreational options to the community of Gahanna. “I think this is mostly over field use”, “I don’t pretend to know all the formal or informal agreements, but I do know that S&PA pays for field use. Because they pay the City, they have more leeway on how they use the fields. GNA knows they can rent the fields. Because GNA chose not to rent the fields is not S&PA problem. The rules will not change just because the competition is gone. It is up to GNA to address this access for the few remaining teams. This is also a change in tradition the first year of any new collaboration is bumpy. It is understandable why GNA feels under siege. Between S&PA coming to town and the Crew Jr. taking so many of their players, coaches and whole teams and having to get a collection agency to collect over \$25,000 in unpaid players fees. Perhaps Gahanna needs a community sub-committee to review soccer issues on a more frequent basis. A committee made up of representatives from GSA, GNA, S&PA, Soccer Locker, maybe the YMCA and this Board. To GNA, I want for your group to continue to add to the Gahanna soccer community, improve upon your product instead of attacking other groups. To the Parks Board I urge you to remember the triple whammy and help S&PA remain part of our vibrant community.

John Dreska – 211 Farmwood Place Gahanna OH

Mr. Dreska stated he has been a resident for about 14 years, has been a coach at GSA and has a child playing in GNA. GNA players practice at a couple of local churches. The only rules that have ever been enforce by both GSA and GNA is you never practice on the playing fields and when the fields are wet, due to possible field damage. It is great to have a balance in competition, but currently my team doesn’t exist, because three kids were just poached off the team by S&PA. Now I have seven kids who don’t have a team, we are going to try and get other players from other teams. Personally this is upsetting. I do appreciate the professional athletes and their fantastic organization; but I would have appreciated it better if they would have come here and spoke to me and looked me in the eye.

Lisa Durbin – Pickerington OH

Ms. Durbin stated she has three children who play soccer; one of them play for S&PA. Ms. Durbin is curious when as adults and parents we are letting our egos get in place of our children. I think we are all here for the same reason, we want our children play soccer; whether it is with GSA, GNA or S&PA I don’t get what is going on here that this is happening and some of the comments about coaches not being here and looking them in the eye. We are finding out about the letters through the grapevine, so that maybe if a meeting was scheduled other than when there are tryouts the coaches would be here. GNA is worried about S&PA being here, I know they have lost other clubs to the Crew. S&PA is bringing in people from all over Columbus. I think we need to get our priorities straight on what we are doing here as adults.

Eric Lampert – 801 Hunters Dr Gahanna OH

Mr. Lampert stated he has been a resident for over 18 years and all three of his kids have played soccer, one in the Crew and two in GSA. I understand all the points being made here. There are a couple of key points what S&PA reported to being initially is not what S&PA are morphing into today. If they would have been up front and told everybody this is what we will eventually become, we wouldn't have this much commotion going on today, that is the classic bait and switch. Practice the way it was set up in the beginning is no practice at Headley. It needs to be made fair across the board and opened up to everybody. The equipment and facility usage with 15% fees that gets paid to the City doesn't pay for the equipment and the upkeep, let's make it fair. The same function people made that point today, this is direct competition against what GSA and GNA does. Explain to me how that is good, poaching players from one team to play on a for profit organization. These folks that are doing this as I understand are not Gahanna residents. Some good points have been made and I want to know how come they are here; why not New Albany, Hilliard, Whitehall. It seems to me that they came to you for one purpose and have morphed into something else. I pay a lot in taxes and it is very expensive sport. This is a great youth sport activity. I would ask that you reconsider what we are doing, because as it stands today in my perspective it is not a fair playing field.

Messinger stated that being no further Hearing of Visitors we will go to New Business – Soccer discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Soccer discussion

Collins stated that staff was approached with a concern regarding soccer. Staff looked at the situation and interpreted City Code and spoke with City Attorney Shane Ewald; this is an appeals issue of an existing field use policy. Therefore it comes to the Parks Board for ultimate decision. As the issue developed staff collected as much information as we could.

Collins presented the information that staff has, the information you need as a Board to make a decision on whether or not we continue with existing policy or change our policy. The history of the working relationship with the local recreation leagues including the soccer association all the way to the time and dated information that happened with this particular situation. Collins explained he would not get into any individual incidents. The Parks & Recreation Board, the citizen representatives needs to make a policy decision.

The Board received an e-mail earlier this week with documents for review that included; the fee policy dated February 2012, 2012 – 2013 Program Agreement between the City and S&PA, 2012 Field Use Agreement with the City and GSA, and also the 2012 reservation fee schedule.

Collins explained that there is a long time relationship with the recreation leagues in the City. The GDPR is charged with working with each of our recreational leagues, support and help them with their recreational endeavors to provide recreational sports opportunities for our residents. GDPR work with the Gahanna Jr. League Sports (baseball/softball), Gahanna Jr. League Football, GSA, over the years GDPR has also supported the Gahanna Lacrosse, In-line Hockey and a couple of others. In the past GDPR had very informal agreements with each organization and worked one on one with each league. Several years ago GDPR began using the Field Use Agreement. The agreement formalized the relationship between the leagues and the City. The leagues have the opportunity to use the fields/facilities based on the conditions outlined in the Field Use Agreement for 100% subsidy. GDPR does not charge these leagues a field user fee, however GDPR charge fair share for non-residents who utilize the facilities.

GDPR lease the fields to the individual leagues, they control the scheduling of fields use. If GDPR receives a request for field rental during the season GDPR contacts the specific league to see if fields are available. If available the question is asked if it is ok with the particular program. In this case GDPR has had a longtime agreement with GSA. GSA has been very good to work with; they have put in thousands of hours and thousands of dollars to improve Headley.

Even before Collins started working at the City there has been another level above the recreation league, the select level. In years past there was the Gahanna Football Club which recently evolved into GNA. It is the understanding of GDPR that GNA is a non-profit, parent lead group that has their own board. However the difference between GSA and GNA is that GNA offers a higher level of play which competes with different organizations throughout the region and state. The cost to play is higher; there is paid staff, coaches, administrators. Typically according to GDPR policy those types of organizations because they are more selective would have to pay for use of GDPR fields/facilities. However, because GNA has been sponsored by GSA for so many years, essentially they have been grandfathered into the use of the fields/facilities at no charge – 100% subsidy. In order to ensure that GSA is still the priority, GNA has to schedule and coordinate everything through GSA.

Looking at the Fee Policy approved by the Parks Board it states that Special Interest Programming is subsidized at 0 – 25% level. In this case GNA would qualify as that, however because they have been involved with GSA over the years, they are under the 75 – 100% subsidy. With any of GDPR fields/facilities there is a rate structure based on the fee policy for other non-profit organizations and private organizations to rent fields/facilities. The revenue from renting fields/facilities goes toward operational cost.

In 2011 GDPR was approached by a private organization S&PA looking at starting a soccer academy and was looking at renting fields. GDPR informed them that there is a recreational league and everything goes through GSA for field rental availability. GDPR also need to check with GSA to see if S&PA would be an issue with them. GDPR and GSA met and discussed S&PA, where GDPR was told the field space was available and GSA was ok with GDPR renting the field space out. After the meeting with GSA, GDPR met again with S&PA to work out a reasonable rate for field use. Looking at multiple events/dates; looking at the current program agreement for instructors, a rate was established at 25% per participant. For example the yoga instructor pays 25% to run programs in our facilities, in exchange she uses our facility, GDPR does all the registrations, we advertise the program in the Gateway, because we believe it is a benefit to the greater Gahanna community and it offers a service for our residents. We used the same formula for the S&PA rental with the agreement that they had to abide by the same rules if we close the fields they could not use them or if GSA has a conflict they will have to move around GSA.

At the end of the spring season GDPR and S&PA set down and reviewed the fees, it was decided the fees were not applicable to them; based on the fact that they were not utilizing the registration system like other programs. We then looked at a facility use rental of 15% rate per registrant for just a rental no registration, no programming, and no advertising.

In the fall GDPR was approached by representatives by GSA and GNA with concerns about S&PA. There was word that S&PA was going to form a recreation league. GDPR met with S&PA and did other investigation and confirmed that S&PA was not forming a recreational league. GDPR checked again with officials from GSA and was told that it was still a compatible use. GDPR went forward with another agreement with S&PA. GDPR was then approached again from separate officials from GSA and GNA that it they did not support the use and GDPR was told that they should only rent to GSA and GNA. At that point it becomes a change in existing policy; we have a field use policy, a rental policy and a fee schedule in place. If it is

going to change, it the decision needs to be a recommendation from the Parks Board. Staff is ok with whatever direction the Board chooses. Staff researched other communities; New Albany only supports one recreation program and one travel program, Dublin has one recreation program and four travel programs. Each community around central Ohio is handling it differently.

Based on some of the concepts that were brought up are very important. The policy regarding practicing on Headley fields we have always struggled on turf quality condition. On a resource standpoint at the City of Gahanna has had good financial years up until 2007/2008 and then challenging financial years since then. GDPR has never had the full resources equal to maintain the turf of all the sports fields at the level that is needed to support the level of play on those fields that would be required from leagues to play on them on a regular basis. GDPR has identified maintenance standards that were adopted from the 2006 Master Plan. The funding that has been available has not been enough to allow us to get the turf quality to where it needs to be for the number of touches desired.

In 2004 or 2005 GDPR did allow the fields to be used for practice and games at Headley. GDPR was unable to control the level of play; and that year saw the most amount of damage to the fields. Immediately the policy was changed for the next season back to no practice on the fields. GDPR has worked closely over the years GSA and GNA to improve the quality of the fields. It is a challenge for staff as well as the community. GDPR wants to provide the best facilities in central Ohio for the lowest cost.

When it comes to the usage and the impact that S&PA has had, GDPR has worked with them on rotating spaces where they play and they have to monitor if we close the fields. To this point there have not been any compliance issues.

While this seems to be a policy decision whether or not we close the rental to just be two groups GSA and GNA or we continue with the existing policy where GSA has the open rental and GDPR goes to them to rent out what is available. GDPR has always worked with GSA and have always checked with them to make sure this type of a process works, whether it was the YMCA corporate challenge in 2003 to the current use from S&PA.

Collins stated that in the past he has mentioned to the Board a concept of moving to a different system for field allocations in the fall. GDPR is in the process of developing it and looking at best practices as well as counting on our volunteers on how it is developed and implemented. GDPR is looking at a complete facility reservation system. All field usage will be tracked instead of doing a bulk usage. Staff will be able to better control the touches on the field and improve the quality of the turf. Currently we know that we are maintaining fields that have not been used all season, GDPR cannot continue to do that.

COE is also renting our fields and have working with GSA to schedule field usage. The difference is that GSA sponsors COE.

The Parks & Recreation Board does not allocate fields or implement policy. City Code gives them the ability to hear appeals of facility usage. The Board does not make the decision to rent to S&PA or not to practice on the fields; these decisions are made by staff.

Questions from the Board

Messinger asked if the original field access of no practice on the fields was that from staff in order to maintain the field turf quality. Collins said his understanding historically that there has been a challenge with turf quality and a decision was made not to allow practice on the fields. The decision was made purely on the quality of turf. There was one season that practice was

allowed on the fields; it was devastating to the fields. Messenger asked how teams come up with practice fields. Collins said that after the no practice rule back in effect, staff asked for any old goals from GSA. The goals were set in fields at Hunters Ridge Park, Friendship, Academy and every green space available at a city park. GSA did the same at local churches, schools and other locations they found. They made arrangements for the teams to practice. GDPR has never been in control of the practices or coordinated them. GDPR has provided additional spaces within City parks.

Tremante asked if the no practice occurs with other volunteer organizations. Euton stated football practices at Middle School West and play games at McCorkle Park. Collins stated that soccer and football both have the restriction on practicing on the playing fields.

Miller asked if S&PA has been in compliance with all the terms of the contract. Euton stated that S&PA from the day they came they wanted to start an academy; they would be forming teams and playing tournaments. The one thing that has changed and was not discussed is the elite team; S&PA currently has one elite team playing in the Buckeye Premier League. The league doesn't play at Headley Park. The teams that play in the league are not required to provide field space. Collins stated the contract agreement does not talk about teams, it is a payment agreement. The agreement is for 2012 thru 2013 with a 30 day notice with or without cause for both parties.

Naegele asked for clarification on the new system that GDPR is moving to; will this allow everyone to practice on the fields since staff will have control of the fields. Collins stated that the intent is to improve the quality of the turf for all users. It is believed that in addition to feeding and fertilization of the fields, the number of touches to the fields needs to be controlled. In the long run the hope is to improve the quality of the turf so well that it becomes this thick grass that would be able to allow practice. This will not happen overnight.

Messenger asked in the interim is there an opportunity for GNA to have access to practice on the fields. Collins the concern is with turf quality. Has the turf quality improved enough to the level that staff believes that it can handle the level of play that GNA would bring. It all comes back to the number of touches per week per field. Messenger asked if there would be a way to negotiate the number of touches. Naegele said GDPR would have the control over the number of touches. Collins said based on the number of teams and the number of touches it could become an option. The only other difference is that practice can be more damaging than games due to the repetition of practice. Messenger asked what the burden would be placed on GDPR. Collins stated that it will have to be staffed. This is still in theory; it still has to all be worked out with the leagues and staff. The vision is to hire a part-time employee 30 – 35 hours per week, a second shift scheduled, they would spend time in the office administering, and the rest of the time on the fields managing the fields.

Miller asked why would it not be a responsibility of GSA, it is their teams; they know how many teams they have. Collins it all comes down to controlling the touches.

Ross asked what happens to the money that comes in from the rental. Collins stated that all revenue collected goes into the city's general fund and recognized as facility rentals. Of the \$3.8 million GDPR spent last year, over \$1 million was generated in revenue, this rental is part of that revenue.

Tremante stated that one way of managing the fields is to manage the touches and to maximize the underutilized fields. We have not ever been able to get to the point of maintaining the standards for the turf. If there were the resources to do that would there be more time and resources to have more touches on the fields.

Collins said that it definitely comes down to resources. There are two ways of looking at getting resources we want to provide; on one hand the parks are all there for residents to enjoy. The tax payer pays for that, for the parks to be there. The specialty use of soccer or select soccer, the resources to pay for the lining of the fields, the mowing, and the turf care needed to provide the services for a select group of people is an extra cost. Some people in some communities believe that it should be a part of their general tax dollars, and everybody should pay for that select use. Others think that the soccer player should pay for that use and let my taxpayer dollars pay for the general use. In Gahanna the current funds available based on the goals of the entire City to provide service, safety, all of those aspects, we do not have the resources to provide that specialty use with our income tax dollars. Eventually we need to find revenues to support it; whether it is through field rentals or eventually individual user fees. A community such as New Albany is a levy voted supported/funded parks district. Voters go to the ballot and vote to pay for the condition of their fields; in addition they run a pay per use system. Each player pays \$25 in addition to the league fees to use the field; the money goes to pay for the lining, mowing, and scheduling the official on the fields. It is completely a user based system. Dublin where their income taxes are more, no one has to pay anything. GDPR is looking at trying to provide the middle ground, where the taxpayers pays for the general maintenance of the park; the cleaning, mowing, restrooms and the things that are there for everybody. The individual users pay for the specialty use. GDPR have met with the individual sports leagues to discuss creating a more accountable system. Euton stated that if there are more dollars available for turf care and the turf is better the capacity of the fields is higher.

Ross asked for an explanation of what COE is. Collins stated that to his understanding COE is an independent privately run organization that does not have a non-profit status; it does not have a board, it has paid coaches, not sure if paid staff. They are a select program; select programs have to be sponsored by a recreation program. In 2010 GSA voted to sponsor COE, just like they sponsor GNA.

Ross asked what the difference between COE and S&PA. Collins stated that the only difference in COE and S&PA is that COE is sponsored by GSA and S&PA is not. GSA has given COE permission to play in MOSSL. Messinger asked if there are non-residents on COE. Collins replied yes there are non-residents on all of the organizations. Recreation leagues are open to everyone. Select leagues hold tryouts, there are higher fees. If you look at the GDPR fee policy the more individual benefit the fewer subsidies. Tremante stated that this is not happening in this case. Collins replied that COE is paying to rent the fields, GNA is getting full subsidies.

Naegele requested clarification on what the Board is voting on. Collins stated that per City Code section 153.03 Powers and Duties the Board has the ability to set the parks and recreation policies. As a staff there is a policy in place and a fee policy that enables for staff to enter into an agreement with organizations; staff followed the policy. Staff was requested by a group of residents that want to appeal the policy; they feel the policy shouldn't be in place and that the fields should only be for use by GSA and the groups they sponsor.

Ross stated she is not comfortable voting on something that seems pretty vague. Collins stated that if the Board makes a recommendation to change the existing policy; staff would change the existing policy and field usage language would be very limited. The agreements are only with the recreational leagues and not with the leagues they are sponsoring.

Franzmann stated that GNA would still not be able to practice on the fields if the policy was changed. Collins stated that is correct; staff can't recommend it is a good idea to open up the fields for regular practice. Franzmann stated she doesn't think that the Board is accomplishing what GNA is trying to accomplish. They still don't get to practice on the fields even if we recommend changing the policy. Collins stated this appeal will not resolve the issue of

practicing on the fields. The appeal is to discontinue the rental to outside groups; then the question would be is GNA considered an outside group or a Gahanna group. We would need to create a new policy and bring it back to the Board for approval then take it to Council. Staff will have to define how we will enter into the agreement in the future.

Tremante stated that the motivation to potentially not to rent to outside groups is that some of the information present is from deviating and morphing from the original agreement which from what we are hearing from staff didn't happen. S&PA is not starting a recreation league. Collins said that S&PA stated they are not starting a recreation league.

Collins introduced the Jim Sterm, President of MOSSL, currently S&PA does have an application to join MOSSL as a recreational league and that application has not been rescinded; they have also applied to the Ohio South State Youth Soccer Association to be a recreational league. No one from S&PA has contacted MOSSL to withdraw the application. S&PA are currently holding tryouts for ages 9 thru high school level. Buckeye Premier where they currently have a team playing does not 9s – 10s playing; so the only place they can play in the 9s – 10s level is in MOSSL. MOSSL does not have a board meeting in which the application can be considered until July 15, 2012. At that point they could go before the board of directors and be voted into MOSSL. Since they are for profit organization there is a strong likelihood that they would not be admitted because none of MOSSL's other organizations are for profit organizations. It presents a challenge legally and administratively.

Collins stated that to answer Tremante question, said that S&PA stated they are not starting a recreation league. They have teams that compete at other levels and with different groups. Euton stated S&PA has one team that plays in the Buckeye Premier League otherwise they play in tournaments. That is what Academies do; they train and play in tournaments. They are hosting try-outs but will accept everybody into the Academy. They are not seeking MOSSL teams; even though they made an application to MOSSL they made the application in response to a requirement to place an ad in a magazine. Once S&PA learned from the application process that their young age groups were considered to be recreational and that they might be able to become MOSSL members the thought was they could do this, until they came back and talked with GSA, GNA and GDPR. They were told they could do that here, we will not support it here. So at the try-outs they are telling people they are not a MOSSL team and that the try-outs are for the Academy and possible Buckeye Premier League team. Even though they have not rescinded the application with MOSSL they have indicated they will not go forward with the application. Collins stated that it has been made clear to S&PA that they can't run a recreation league on City fields.

Tremante asked that the basis for the conflict is strictly field use time for practice. Ross stated that if we rescind the contract then we are not going to turn around and say you can use the fields for practice. Euton stated he believes the issues he has heard besides the field usage and practice time; the constituents from GNA are saying it is also a competition thing. There are only a certain number of players in Gahanna local to Headley Park and with more clubs or academies here it just spreads those players into other directions.

Collins stated that from the start of this process GDPR has said they would implement the policy that the residents want; if the residents want GDPR to provide facilities to only parent lead programs GDPR will do that. If they want GDPR to provide facilities only to the recreational lead programs and all the select programs to be treated differently, GDPR will do.

Ross stated that if it is made consistent to say that it is only resident based programs then isn't limiting the money coming in to put back into the fields.

Miller stated that if the contract states the agreement can be terminated with S&PA with a 30

day notice and if we do that why would the fee policy need changed. Collins believes that if the agreement is terminated with S&PA and not make changes to the policy any other groups can come forward with the same request. It needs to be made fair and equitable GDPR is either going to rent or not rent.

Euton suggested that the Board think about what has been said tonight and continue researching on own. Collins agreed and requested the Board consider having a special meeting soon. The Board does not have a July board meeting scheduled. The Board will come to a census on a date and time and the information will be posted on the City website.

GPRF donation request

Collins explained that the Foundation will be hosting the Friday After Five event on September 21, 2012. The Foundation is asking for donations the same as donated in 2011.

Golf Course Clubhouse rental – 3 hrs
Woodside Green Shelter rental – 1 time slot
Shelter rental – 1 time slot
Standard Birthday party pkg
Freedom Festival family table – 1
Paddle Boat – 4 rentals
Golf

- Golf passes – 8
- Pool passes – 4
- Adult memberships - 1

Pool

- Family membership – 1
- Senior membership – 2
- Single membership – 1

Miller made a **MOTION** to approve the request donations to GPRF; seconded by Franzmann. **On roll call vote:** Naegele, yes, Tremante, yes, Franzmann, yes, Messinger, yes, and Miller, yes. **Motion carried 5 – 0.**

Senior Center Advisory Board Appointment

Collins stated that Danise Hall, Senior Center Supervisor is recommending the appointment of Betty L. Shepherd to the Senior Center Advisory Board. Mrs. Shepherd has lived in Gahanna for four years and is a member at the Senior Center and she and her husband both actively participate in day trips and programs at the center. The term will be May 2012 to May 2014.

Naegele made a **MOTION** to appoint Betty L. Shepherd to the Gahanna Senior Center Advisory Board for the term of May 2012 to May 2014; seconded by Tremante. Tremante, yes, Franzmann, yes, Messinger, yes, Miller, yes, and Naegele. **Motion carried 5 – 0.**

CORRESPONDENCE

Collins stated that all correspondence regarding the soccer issues were forwarded to the Board prior to the meeting. Collins and McCollam have been working on information to share about the budge public forum on June 19th. The information will be sent via e-mail to the Board.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Collins introduced Beth McCollam, Public Information/Marketing Coordinator. Collins presented the Directors Report. Revenues are increase from last year at the pools, golf course, recreation programs, and OHEC. Parks & Recreation has its own Facebook page, be sure and take a look at it. The budget was given to Council on June 1st. Directors present their portion of the budget to Council on June 11th at 7pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Aquatics Advisory Committee

Nothing at this time

Bicycle & Trails Advisory Committee

Nothing at this time

Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Nothing at this time

Gahanna Parks & Recreation Foundation

Nothing at this time

School Board Report

Nothing at this time

MEMBERS COMMENTS

Nothing at this time

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Parks & Recreation Board at this time, Tremante made a **MOTION** to adjourn.

The Parks & Recreation Board meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Ripley, Administrative Assistant

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2012

Luke Messinger, Vice Chair